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The blessed memory of the just.

A

DISCOURSE

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

JARED SPARKS, LL.D.

DELIVERED MARCH 18, 1866,

BEFORE THE FIRST PARISH IN CAMBRIDGE,

BY

WILLIAM NEWELL,
MINISTER OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE.

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S E R M O N .

“THE MEMORY OF THE JUST IS BLESSED.”—Proverbs x. 7.

ONE of the most precious of God's gifts is the society of affectionate and virtuous friends. To live under the same roof, to share the same duties and pleasures, with those whom we can love with all the heart,—to feel the gentle influence of their virtues, shining around them with a mild, perpetual light,—to breathe the atmosphere of their lives, to enjoy the sweetness of their daily sympathy and support,—to be able to go for counsel and wisdom, for courage and patience, to minds into which we can pour out our hopes, fears, and doubts with entire freedom and trust,—to double and prolong our enjoyments by communicating them to others, to whom we are bound, not only by ties of kindred, but by the holier and stronger bonds of affection and respect,—to allay our anxieties and griefs by the thought that they are at our side, that they feel *for* us and *with* us, and that, whatever may betide, their countenances will beam benignantly on our way,—to have our good purposes quickened, our good principles invigorated, and the whole inner being softened and

purified by intimate communion with the living examples of Christian goodness and piety, — who can fully estimate these blessings? A world, were it ours, would cheaply purchase, if a world could buy, the tender and thoughtful affection, the kind attentions, the cordial aid, the disinterested advice, the wise and pleasant conversation, of the dear companion, parent, kinsman, friend, the honored and the loved, in those favored families where the lives of the righteous are still spared to gladden and to bless the lofty or the lowly dwelling in which the providence of God has placed them. But those lives are held by an uncertain tenure. Over them, as over all, hangs the suspended sword. Over them, as over all, is written the inexorable, yet hiddenly beneficent law. Believing, as we do, in a Father God, believing that he has made the universe in perfect wisdom, and that all the parts of His administration, and all the events of our existence are in unison with the Infinite Benevolence that constitutes the essential glory of His nature, we feel that there are wise and kind purposes to be answered by death, which death only can accomplish. Sometimes it is attended with mysteries of pain, suffering, and apparently irreparable loss to the survivors, both in temporal and spiritual good, which we must wait for the revelations of another life to explain. But these exceptional cases must not shake our faith in truths written on the universe, and proclaimed to us by the messengers of the Most High. As Christians, we believe that all the events of our being are ordered and overruled

by divine wisdom and love ; as Christians, we believe that death to the good is the greatest of blessings, — the portal of Heaven, the change which brings them into near and blissful communion with Christ and with God. A more living life is theirs in the spirit world ; nor is their life on earth wholly ended when they cease to breathe. Their memory still dwells with a beneficent power in the places which they once gladdened with their presence, and in the minds with which they once took sweet counsel in the hallowed connections of a happy and religious home. Thus they continue to guide and to bless us, long after their mortal forms have been buried in the dust. They live in the hearts of their kindred. They rise again in the hour of musing to the eyes of mourning affection. They speak to us in accents unheard by the world, but known and felt as theirs in the silent depths of the soul.

The memory of the just, of the wise, of the truly good, of the truly great, of the servants of Christ and the benefactors of men, has its place among the blessed influences by which the Spirit of God lifts us to a higher plane of feeling and action, and gives a quickening strength to our sometimes dim faith in the realities of the life to come. It rebukes the sad scepticism that hangs over the tomb, and sees only the pale corpse, the shell of the flown spirit, but cannot see the glory and the beauty beyond. When the stunning blow that separates us from the objects of our affection first falls upon us, when that countenance which has long brightened our way is

stamped with the stillness of death, it is hard to realize that the soul which once beamed through the eye, and spoke from the lips, is still living and conscious and happy, though the light of that eye is quenched, and the accents of those lips hushed forever. But as we look back from a distance of time, and view the pageantry and circumstances of death in their true light, we are able to discern more clearly the sublime truth, over which they have thrown a momentary cloud. Then the bright image of the departed rises up before us, and we hear a voice, saying, as Christ to the doubting disciple, "Be not faithless, but believing." Has it perished forever, that noble mind, stamped with God's image, trained for God's service? Are those kind and tender affections, that diffused comfort and joy around them, those "thoughts that wander through eternity," those angelic aspirations and hopes that ally man to his Maker, those high capacities that on earth are but half developed, half satisfied, — are all extinguished forever, buried in the dust? Is there no other sphere in which they may yet live and grow? We cannot believe it. Our reason and our affections, the whispers of hope and the instinctive cravings of our nature, re-echo the good tidings of the Gospel, and both welcome and confirm its message of the soul's immortal life. And never do we feel so powerfully the assurance of this truth, as when we recall the remembrance of the gifted and the good, taken from us in the ripening promise of youth, in the more extended usefulness of manhood, or in the

venerable wisdom and mellowed virtues of declining age.*

The memory of the dead not only quickens our faith in the future world, but it leads our thoughts and our affections heavenward. Our hearts overleap the chasm that divides us from the world of spirits, and go in quest of their missing objects. We cannot forget them, even amidst all the crowding cares and dizzy excitements of the most busy life, — nor have we any reason to suppose that they will forget us. When we think of them, therefore, we see them waiting for us, as it were, watching anxiously over our steps, praying for our welfare, invit-

* I cannot help adding here the coincident expression, at a meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society, commemorative of Mr. Sparks, by his friend, Professor Parsons, of the same thought, which "pressed upon me," he says, "during the days and evenings when I sat by the bedside where he was dying. There lay a man who had been gifted with excellent qualities, and these, during a long and busy life, were disciplined, cultivated, invigorated to the last of that life. Can a rational man believe that all this long progress was towards — nothingness. His wisdom and his goodness were the means of usefulness and of happiness to himself and to others. Through all those many years they grew and accumulated. Is it rational to believe that all this growth and accumulation were only for their own extinction? I refer not now to religious faith. I appeal only to reasonableness and probability. His unusually long life was far more than commonly useful and happy. But it was also, if judged by any test we can apply, a constant preparation for more usefulness and more happiness. What is there in the universe, or in its facts, or in its laws, which justifies the belief that all this long continued and ever advancing preparation was for — no end? — I am sure, and I have reason to be sure that my dear friend would not himself have thought so. And I believe he would regard it as the crowning usefulness of his long and useful life, if the thought of him should suggest to any mind, or confirm in any mind, the great truth, that Death is but a step forward in life."

ing us to the path which leads upward to their own, and urging us to perseverance in well-doing. Heaven itself becomes more attractive, when we thus associate with its pleasures and its scenes of duty the images of those whom we have already loved upon earth.

Then, too, the memory of the virtuous dead is blessed in the moral influence which it exerts over the heart and the life, quickening and strengthening all that is good. And this it does not only by reminding us of the uncertainties of life, by showing us its true value and its noblest ends, and by producing a religious seriousness of feeling, but by keeping before us bright examples of high excellence; and examples, too, to which personal affection adds a quickening power. The life even of a good man whom we never saw wins us to the love and the following of the virtues that were beautifully manifested in his character, — how much more the pure lives of those whom we have ourselves known, and with whom we have had daily and sweet communion, and whose presence has been as sunlight to our path! As we call back their departed forms, we see them in a more radiant aspect, — their goodness clothed with a heavenly lustre, and their infirmities disappearing in the distance, in that tender light which death throws over the venerated and the loved. We cannot think of them without being made better.

Yes, the memory of the just is indeed blessed. Though for a time it may awaken a painful sorrow,

not to be entirely subdued even by the power of religious faith, it will at length become, what it is designed to be, a means of spiritual improvement, a source of consolation, and a strengthener of Christian faith and hope; it will turn our affections towards God and Heaven; it will inspire us with holy purposes; it will check the spirit of worldliness, and keep before us the higher ends of our existence; it will tend to create or to quicken in our own souls the virtues that have made both our loss and our consolations so great; it will give fresh life to the hope of immortality, and prepare us for the unseen world, of which it so loudly speaks. So may it be, fellow-Christians, with the memory of every follower of the Lord, whose goodness, unknown perhaps to the world, and now forgotten by fame, still dwells shrined in the secret recesses of the fond kinsman's heart. So shall it be with the memory of that true disciple of Jesus, who, his earthly Sabbaths being ended, is now rejoicing in the rest and glory of Heaven.

Ever blessed to his family and friends (and no enemy in the wide world had he, none knew him but to love him) will be the memory of that excellent and eminent man, our fellow-worshipper for many years, who has just passed on into the spirit-world. Death has set his sanctifying seal on his character and his work, and neither will be soon forgotten. The remembrance of his life's labors is bound up with the history of our Washington and the history of the country of which we fondly call

Washington the Father,—now twice saved, with the promise that the bright dawn will be followed by a yet brighter noon, shining more and more unto the perfect day.

The name of Jared. Sparks stands among the well-known and honored names that adorn our American literature and have acquired a European fame. No more devoted pioneer and explorer, none so full-sheaved a worker in his special department of the field of letters, can be found among the living or the dead of our country. And to none do we owe so much as to him for the assiduous care and industry, the sound judgment, and the wise discrimination with which he has collected materials for a full understanding of the men and the times to which his inquiries were directed.

He was born in Willington, Conn., May 10, 1789. Like so many of our most distinguished men, he had to contend with straitened circumstances in early life, and under the discipline of privation and difficulty won strength for a richer success. His boyhood and youth were employed in the common work of a farm and in mechanical labor. But he had an intense thirst for learning, and gave all his spare time to reading and study. The scanty instruction of the district schools in his native town served only to awaken, not to satisfy, his mental cravings, and he seized every opportunity of intellectual culture.* His uncommon attainments and

* It is said that he shingled the roof of a minister's house in Willington, in return for instruction in Latin.

ardent desire of knowledge attracted the attention of the neighborhood, and by the kindness of friends, who became interested in him and saw his youthful promise, he was sent to the Academy in Exeter, N. H., making his way thither on foot, the Rev. Abiel Abbott, of Coventry, carrying his trunk for him swung under his chaise. Diligently using his new opportunities, he was in due time prepared for College, and entered Harvard University in 1811, under President Kirkland, of whom he was a special favorite, and for whom he always entertained the highest reverence and the most grateful and affectionate regard. Though he was on the whole of a strong constitution, active and vigorous in his habits, and capable of great physical exertion, he seems to have been subject to occasional turns of sickness, and to moods of depression. In consequence partly of ill health, partly of his poverty, he was but a little more than two whole years in college, and that, with this disadvantage, he should have graduated as he did, was a proof of his great ability, as well as of the confidence and respect in which he was held by the officers of the College. In his Sophomore year he was teacher in a private family at Havre de Grace, in Maryland; was there when the town was burnt by the British troops under Admiral Cockburn in May, 1813, and was called out with the militia for the defence of the place.* At the close of his en-

* Soon after his arrival at Havre de Grace, while he was staying at the public house in that place, in a dejected state of mind, occasioned by some disappointment of his expectations and the loneliness of his sit-

gagement as a teacher he returned to Cambridge, and graduated with honor in 1815. The two following years were spent in teaching a private school at Lancaster in this State.*

nation, among people of a quite different spirit and training from his own, two gentlemen, travellers on their way to Washington, came to the inn. A beautiful island in the Susquehanna attracted their attention, and one of them procured a boat, and invited Mr. Sparks, whom they had met on the piazza, a stranger to them both, to accompany him to the place. After a delightful excursion, and a walk around the island intensely enjoyed by Mr. Sparks in the pleasant society and conversation of the new-comer, who treated him with double cordiality on finding that the young man was a student of Harvard, as he was himself a graduate of the College, the Hon. Josiah Quincy, then Representative in Congress, as the stranger proved to be, returned to the inn, and introduced Mr. Sparks to his companion, the Rev. Dr. Channing. The interview gave the forlorn and struggling student new life and spirit. Dr. Channing, who had himself had a similar experience in teaching in Virginia, refreshed and strengthened him by words of sympathy, counsel, and good cheer. And his new friends were his warm friends ever after. — The imagination dwells with interest on the picture of this first meeting of his, at the Southern inn on the road to Baltimore and Washington, with those two distinguished men, little dreaming of the after events which were to connect them so intimately with the youthful scholar, the one as the famous preacher of his ordination sermon, the other as his predecessor in the Presidency of Harvard University, as well as his neighbor and associate for many years in Cambridge, where Mr. Sparks lived and died in the street called by the name of his honored friend.

* He cultivated in this preparatory sphere of service the habits of steady and methodical industry which distinguished him through life. Soon after commencing his school, he writes: "I board at Major Carter's, a mile and a quarter from my school, to and from which I walk twice a day. I rose this morning an hour before sunrise, and rode five or six miles before breakfast, — an exercise which I shall continue regularly. My school occupies six hours; and I have resolved to devote, and thus far have devoted, six hours out of the twenty-four to study." And before this he has a memorandum of his walking from Cambridge to Bolton, twenty-six miles, setting out at half past one P. M., and arriving at Bolton at eight in the evening.

In 1817 he was chosen Tutor in Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in Harvard University. Here he soon after commenced the study of divinity. He was at the same time one of an association for conducting the North American Review, which had been started two years before. In 1819 he was ordained as Pastor of the First Independent Church in Baltimore. It was on this occasion that Dr. Channing preached the powerful and famous sermon that created so much interest and excitement at the time, and gave a fresh impulse to the Unitarian controversy, ending, as you know, in the disruption, as in Cambridge, of many churches, and the drawing of the lines of sectarian distinction more sharply between the Orthodox, so called, and the Liberal Churches of this country. He remained four years at Baltimore, performing, in addition to the common labors of his profession, in an arduous and important position, a large amount of theological and literary labor, in the editorship of the Unitarian Miscellany, and in controversial publications, called forth by the necessity of maintaining and defending the religious views which he had espoused.

It was during his ministry at Baltimore, in 1821, that he was elected Chaplain to Congress; a tribute to his rising worth which, on account of his Unitarian faith, excited the ire and alarm of the zealots of the time. The clergyman of an Episcopal church in Washington, on the Sunday following the election, said to his congregation: "By a recent vote of a majority of one branch of our National Legislature,

they have proclaimed to the world, in language as loud as they can speak, that 'they will not have Christ to rule over them.' One of the members in the minority, after the vote was taken, with deep regret observed, 'We have voted Christ out of the house.' In looking to the future, what have we not reason to apprehend, when the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed?"

In the year following his ordination, he published a volume entitled "Letters on the Ministry, Ritual, and Doctrine of the Protestant Episcopal Church";* and in 1823, "An Inquiry into the Comparative Moral Tendency of Trinitarian and Unitarian Doctrines." In 1822, he planned and commenced the publication of "A Collection of Essays and Tracts in Theology," from various authors, such as Newton,

* In an able review of this work, in the *Christian Examiner* for July, 1820, the writer says: "The work of Mr. Sparks is the best which has appeared, since the time of Chauncy, on the Episcopal controversy. He had the advantage over Dr. Miller in not writing in Presbyterian fetters, and in possessing a learning possibly not so various, (for he is a much younger man,) but far better digested, more systematic and accurate. The cause of letters owes much to this gentleman, and, if it had not surrendered him to higher claims, would yet hope much more. In his removal, the University resigned a member on whose reputation and services it set a high value, and it was felt like the loss of a distinguished freeman to the literary republic of the East. Under his direction the *North American Review* made great progress towards that reputation which has enabled it at last (in conjunction with other publications to the same end) to lower the tone of our Transatlantic traducers, and to give itself no mean proof of the intellectual advances which it vindicates. From this flattering path to a wide reputation, and from the pursuit of favorite studies, he hesitated not to withdraw himself to the service of religion, and went, with, to say the least, no elating prospects, to preach in a new field the doctrines of uncorrupt Christianity."

Whitby, Emlyn, Clark, Lardner, Chillingworth, and others, eminent for their talents, learning, and virtues, with biographical and critical notices. This extended to six volumes, the last of which was published in 1826. In 1823, after four years of work in the ministry, on account of impaired health and for various reasons satisfactory to himself, he resigned his pastoral charge. In his letter of resignation he says: "The religious views by which you are characterized, I believe to be the truths of Heaven, as revealed and proclaimed to the world by the Son of God. To me they afford the choicest solace in life, and to my mind they are fraught with the most consoling and encouraging hopes which a mortal can carry with him to the presence of his righteous Judge; and my prayer is, that I may never be weary in using such powers and influence as I may possess to diffuse religious sentiments, which I deem so honorable to God, and so salutary to men." The feeling which he thus expressed never faltered or changed. Among the new scenes and pursuits on which he afterwards entered, he ever maintained his warm interest in the advancement of the doctrines of the Unitarian faith. Always mild, candid, and tolerant, he was yet most earnest in his desire and effort to spread the views which he deemed most "honorable to God, and salutary to men."

After his retirement from the ministry and his return to Massachusetts, he was for seven years proprietor and editor of the *North American Review*

In 1828 he published, from original materials, an interesting life of "John Ledyard, the American Traveller." Some years before this, in the course of inquiries undertaken for a friend connected with the University Press, he had conceived the plan of preparing a full and authentic life of Washington, and of collecting from all sources, at home and abroad, the correspondence of that great man, and the official and private documents that might throw light on his public career and the history of his times. In preparation for this work, on which he spent ten years of his life, he made extensive researches in various parts of our own country, and then went to Europe and employed a year in examining the public offices in London and Paris, and taking copies of all important papers bearing on his subject. He was received with much courtesy and consideration, and through the kindness and friendship of the French Minister, Guizot, as well as of the English officials, he found unexpected facilities for the accomplishment of his enterprise. The first fruits of his labors appeared in 1829 – 30, in the "Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution," a work in twelve volumes octavo, followed, two years after, by the "Life of Gouverneur Morris, with Selections from his Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers," in three volumes octavo. "The American Almanac," a work of great value and various information, was also originated, and its first volume, for 1830, edited by him. He also became editor of the "Library of American Biography," of which two series were pub-

lished, comprising twenty-five volumes in all, between the years 1834 and 1848, and for which several of the biographies, such as those of Benedict Arnold, Father Marquette, Count Pulaski, Charles Lee, Ethan Allen, and others, were prepared by his own indefatigable pen. Thus, in the midst of the execution of his great and specially chosen work, he was carrying on with admirable diligence other literary labors of much interest and value. In 1834, and the three years following, he gave to the world his "Life and Writings of Washington," in twelve octavo volumes, — a work which will ever claim the gratitude of all who love their country and revere the memory of the wise and noble man who did so much to secure its independence, and to lay the foundations deep and strong of our national union and greatness.

In 1840, he completed the publication of "The Works of Benjamin Franklin, with Notes, and a Life of the Author," containing much before unpublished or uncollected matter, in ten octavo volumes. He soon after made a second journey to Europe, and, in his renewed researches among the French archives, discovered the map with the red line marked upon it, concerning which, and the use made of it in settling the question of the Northeastern Boundary in 1842, there was so much debate, both in this country and in England. In 1854 appeared "Correspondence of the American Revolution, being Letters of eminent Men to George Washington, from the Time of his taking Command of the Army to the End of his Pres-

idency, edited from the Original Manuscripts." This was the last of the important and interesting works, illustrative of American history, which we owe to the patriotic zeal, the patient industry and research of Mr. Sparks. He had previously, however, in 1852, in reply to the strictures of Lord Mahon and others on his mode of editing the writings of Washington, printed two pamphlets, fully vindicating his course, and showing that the only important criticisms were wholly unfounded and unjust. I need not speak, to those who are acquainted with his writings, of the thoroughness, carefulness, candor, and discrimination by which they are marked, and their clear, exact, and simple style, reflecting the qualities of his mind and heart. No finer examples can be found of patient research and conscientious devotion to historic truth.

The brief survey which I have thus given of his literary labors and their abundant fruits, amounting to nearly a hundred volumes, a library in themselves, is enough to show, without any added words of mine, what an enterprising and indefatigable worker he has been; and what an amount of service in his chosen and providential sphere he accomplished in his meridian strength and zeal, so quiet, yet so persistent and effective. Few have done so much as he, and so well.

When to all this we add his academical engagements and lectures, the duties of the Professorship to which, in 1839, he was chosen, the Professorship of Ancient and Modern History,—an office which he held for ten years, until, in 1849, he was

elected President of the University which he had loved and served, the worthy successor of Kirkland, Quincy, and Everett, respected and beloved by officers and students, — we may well admire and honor the fruitful industry of his well-spent life. An accident, which for a time crippled his arm and disabled him for the accustomed use of his pen, about fifteen years since, interrupted and finally prevented the execution of a design which he had matured, and for which he had made large preparation, of writing the Foreign Diplomatic History of our American Revolution.* But he never murmured. He bore the disappointment with a serene submission, a calm piety and patience, as admirable as the activity and energy with which he had labored in full health and strength.

The memory of his virtues will forever abide with his friends, shining in their souls with a soft and pleasant light: and so he will continue to serve and to bless them in death, as he served and blessed them in life. Those who knew him best loved him most. "In simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God," he had his "con-

* It was his original intention to write a history of the American Revolution, ~~which he had written in manuscript, and which he had intended to publish, but which he never did so.~~ He had in his collection of manuscripts, gathered in this country and in Europe, very rich and abundant materials for such a work, most carefully and methodically arranged and bound up in volumes. These, bequeathed by his will to his son, ultimately to revert to the College Library, it has been concluded to deposit for safe-keeping in the Library, as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made.

versation in the world." The nearer you came to him, the stronger the attraction of his pure and true spirit. His was a somewhat reserved, restrained, undemonstrative nature. He made no show; he felt often more than he expressed. Under the influence of a physical depression to which he was subject, he was sometimes sad and silent. But underneath, there beat the tenderest heart, the kindest affections, the warmest generosity, ready at every call to pour out its gifts. His character was built on the granite base of Truth, Simplicity, Rectitude, like his own Washington's. In some respects, he resembled that great and good man: his own spirit was naturally attuned to the character which he had undertaken to portray, and found not only delight, but added strength, and a kindred tone of thought and feeling, communicated, perhaps unconsciously to himself, in the carrying on of his first great and gladly chosen work. His aims from the beginning were high and generous; no low, narrow, self-indulgent views tainted his heart or life. But those who knew him from his youth, and knew him best, saw that there was in him, beyond the common strain, something large and heroic. Early in life, he had conceived the plan of becoming a traveller and an explorer of Africa; and came very near to carrying out his project; if circumstances had favored, he would have been a Ledyard, or a Livingstone, as daring, as persistent, as they. But God had other work for him to do, and he has done it, we all know how well, — done more than any other man among

us for the historical literature of our country:—the first real, thorough student in this department, giving the first complete example of the fulness and accuracy of research and exploration of authentic documents and accumulation of materials and personal preparation in many ways for the work.

“Blessed,” says the Scripture, “is the memory of the just”: of the just. In the narrower, as well as in the larger sense, does the word apply to our honored friend. He was thoroughly just, upright, conscientious in his dealings; fair, candid, equitable in his judgments; never willingly, never consciously, I am sure, doing wrong by word or act, with pen or tongue, to any man. He was transparently truthful, artless,* and sincere; with a mingled simplicity and unassuming dignity, a blended suavity and quiet reserve, that were very winning. And he was as sweet-tempered as he was truthful; as gracious and benevolent as he was just; kind, cordial, tender-hearted, full of mercy and good works. No one ever went to him in vain for help. Perhaps he was in danger, sometimes, of being over-charitable, over-generous, giving

* The testimony of his classmate and life-long friend, Prof. Parsons, in his tribute before the Historical Society, to the memory of their late Vice-President, well expresses what all who knew him, felt: “I have not known and I cannot imagine a man more absolutely devoid of vanity or affectation. He valued the good opinion of good men, as evidence that he had succeeded in his efforts to be and to do what such men approve, and that what he had done for others would be acceptable and useful. But in the half-century of our acquaintance, I have never witnessed an act, a look, a word, which indicated even the thought of seeming other than he was,—of winning even momentary approbation by mere seeming.”

to the asker beyond the asker's claim. Many a poor man, many a poor woman in this neighborhood, will feel the loss of his pleasant word, his bountiful purse, ever open, as in his College Presidency to the young men who needed, as he himself once needed, the helping hand, so to all whom he had opportunity to succor and serve.

Fully did he, if any man, meet the requirement announced by the prophet of old, saying to his people, still saying by the spirit to us all, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?"

He walked humbly with his God, as he walked modestly and lovingly with man. He was truly, unaffectedly devout, of a deeply reverent spirit; in his views of Scripture and of Christ adhering to the school of Channing and Ware; disliking and dreading the innovations and radicalism of the day, as well as the false reaction in an opposite direction, but ever steadfastly manifesting his profound religiousness of mind in outward ordinances, in constant attendance, morning and afternoon, at the sanctuary, in the whole tone of his speech, in the whole tenor of his life; he was, in short, a true disciple of Christ, both in love to man, and in love to God.

What he was in his family,* how gentle, affec-

* Mr. Sparks was married on the 16th of October, 1832, to Miss Frances Anne Allen of Hyde Park, New York. Her death in 1835, and subsequently that of their only child, a daughter of fine promise, at the age of

tionate, thoughtful, sympathizing, how devoted in his parental care, how watchful for the best interests of each and all, they best know who miss the husband and the father's love.

Sadly shall we too miss him from his accustomed place in this temple of the Lord. It was good to see and to meet here one whom we all honored, and to join with him in our Sabbath worship. And yet we feel that we have no right to mourn over so peaceful and happy an end, coming in the course of nature, in the ripe fulness of time, to a clear mind and a body not yet shattered by age. He had reached the perilous, doubtful limit beyond which the prospect for this life grows ever more dim; he has passed away, as he himself would have wished, by a brief and gentle summons; * his work on earth was done and waited only for the Master's "Well done!" and he has fallen asleep in Christ that he may awake to a brighter morn and an immortal youth. "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

twelve, were among the few shadows that fell on a life otherwise prospered and happy. He was again married, on the 21st of May, 1839, to Miss Mary C. Silsbee, a daughter of Hon. Nathaniel Silsbee of Salem, a wealthy and honored merchant, our Senator in Congress. Four children, a son, now in College, and three daughters, survive to mourn with their mother the loss of one whose domestic virtues and rare sweetness, purity and simplicity of character, were the light of his favored home.

* Mr. Sparks died at his residence in Cambridge on the 14th of March, after a week's illness, of pneumonia, attended with but little suffering, at the age of seventy-six years and ten months.

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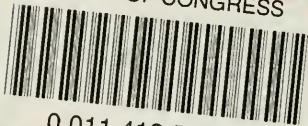


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